

CHAPTER 6: INTEGRATING AND RESOLVING OCEAN MANAGEMENT ISSUES

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The analyses and recommendations of the previous chapters identify the need to achieve four important management objectives:

- 1. Increase consideration of habitat and resource zone interdependence within California's ocean ecosystem in efforts to assess, conserve, restore, and manage California's ocean resources.*
- 2. Enhance the opportunities for environmentally sound, sustainable, and economically beneficial ocean-dependent industries.*
- 3. Advance research, educational programs, and technology developments to meet future needs and uses of the ocean.*
- 4. Make the current legal and jurisdictional regime for managing California's ocean ecosystem more coherent, efficient, and effective.*

Achieving Goals: Accountability and Coordination

Attaining these four objectives is complicated by multiple agencies of jurisdiction, each with respective mandates and responsibilities that are sometimes conflicting or uncoordinated, and other times duplicative.

What is self-evident to even a casual observer is the need to simplify and bring more cohesiveness to ocean resource management. This task is best accomplished by those entities involved in the day-to-day management of California's ocean resources and by establishing a process that effectively brings the most important and precedent-setting policy issues to the attention of the State's top policy-makers.

Accordingly, effective ocean resource management and implementation of the priorities identified in this Agenda would be enhanced by two initiatives: (1) bringing together the many State agencies with ocean and coastal resource management responsibilities to increase coordination efforts and to provide a forum to help resolve issues at the State level, and (2) establishing a process for cooperating with and soliciting advice from other levels of government, the public, and the private sector.

Recommendation: *Convene a State cabinet-level ocean resources management coordinating council, composed of agency and department directors with ocean resource management responsibilities, to help integrate the multiple agencies and programs of ocean and coastal jurisdiction.* The effectiveness of this council will depend on its ability to work with public and private organizations to identify and develop solutions to ocean and coastal resource management issues of concern to the State of California.

This council would provide a cabinet-level forum to coordinate inter-agency, multi-state, and international approaches to California ocean resource management issues. It should meet on a regular basis and seek the advice and recommendations of the interested public, private, or governmental parties ("stakeholders") who work with these issues on a regular basis, but final decision-making authority should reside with the inter-agency members and their respective departments, boards and commissions. This process will provide a regular communication link necessary for these agencies to form a cohesive public/private ocean management approach for California.

Council Membership. The council should be chaired by the Secretary for Resources, consistent with the authority vested with the Resources Agency as the lead for ocean resource management issues (AB

205, Chapter 1027, Stats.1991). Council meetings should occur quarterly, or more often as necessary, and should include the following agencies and departments:

- ***Resources Agency of California***
 - Office of the Secretary
 - California Coastal Commission
 - Department of Boating and Waterways
 - Department of Conservation
 - Department of Fish and Game
 - Department of Parks and Recreation
 - Department of Water Resources
 - San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
 - State Coastal Conservancy
 - State Lands Commission
- ***California Environmental Protection Agency***
 - Office of the Secretary
 - State Water Resources Control Board
- ***Other Agencies***
 - California Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency
 - California Trade and Commerce Agency
 - Department of Health Services, California Health and Welfare Agency
 - Governor's Office of Planning and Research
- ***Ex-Officio Members - Research Advisors***
 - California Sea Grant College System
 - University of Southern California Sea Grant Institutional Program

Forums for Discussion. The council will solicit input from interested parties at the local level to help identify and refine issues to be addressed, seek policy and technical advice about issues pending consideration, and identify potential cooperative efforts. The Ocean Resources Management Program staff will work with local representatives on a variety of ocean and coastal management objectives through public meetings or other forums to help determine the most pressing management needs at the local level. Staff would participate in these local forums and share the information with the full council during regularly scheduled council meetings. Examples of existing forums or organizations with which the council should work include associations of local governments, national marine sanctuary advisory councils or committees, state agency meetings (i.e., California Coastal Commission, State and regional water boards, Fish and Game Commission), the California Biodiversity Council, harbor safety committees, and other government, industry, or professional associations. Participation in these forums or organizations will depend on the subject and timing of the issues being considered.

Local level participation will be enhanced by the recent passage of the Coastal Resources and Energy Assistance Act (Firestone; Chapter 997, Stats.1996; commonly referred to as AB 1431) which will annually provide up to \$3.5 million to local governments for addressing ocean and coastal resource management issues. The Governor signed this legislation to provide technical and financial assistance to local governments with approved local coastal programs to help them effectively exercise their responsibility for improving management of California's ocean and coastal resources. The Resources Agency supported the bill, in part, because the program objectives are consistent with the mission and goals of the Ocean Resources Management Program. The focus of this legislation is on providing funds to local governments affected by offshore energy development, although some funds may be available for addressing overall ocean management needs.

Success of the council will depend, in part, upon the availability of local forums, as well as the participation of member agencies and departments in achieving consensus-based solutions. A State coordinating council will be a critical first step to addressing the issues raised in the Agenda. However, long range success depends on a commitment by the federal agencies of jurisdiction, local governments, and affected stakeholders to participate in a like manner. Ultimately, true coordination and integration of this public policy will require the full participation of all stakeholders within the council.